



EXHIBIT  
DATE 1/18/11  
HB 159

NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

INSTITUTE FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION

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BRIAN JUDY, MONTANA STATE LIAISON

TO: Members of the House Fish, Wildlife & Parks Committee  
FROM: Brian Judy, NRA-ILA Montana State Liaison  
DATE: January 18, 2011  
RE: House Bill 159 (Restrict FWP authority) - **SUPPORT**

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On behalf of the tens of thousands of National Rifle Association members who live in the State of Montana, I would like to register strong **support for House Bill 159**, legislation to restrict the authority of the Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) and the FWP Commission to regulate firearms and ammunition.

The need for this bill became evident in 2010 when FWP proposed regulatory changes for the 2010-2011 hunting season. Absent one shred of scientific evidence in support of their suggested change, FWP proposed that lead shot be prohibited for all upland game bird hunting on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) throughout the state. A review of the "Hunting Season/Quota Change Supporting Information" document prepared by FWP was shocking in that it provided absolutely NO support for the recommended policy change.

In fact, it contained multiple points indicating a *lack* of objective biological or scientific support for the proposed change. Consider this quote from the FWP "support" document with respect to the requirement that even very low density grouse hunters would be prohibited from using lead shot on WMAs: "Lead presence and accumulation under extremely low levels of lead shot shell use has not been established as a significant environmental concern." Or this comment which clearly shows the politicization of the issue: "...this proposal is as much or more about programmatic message and general intent as it is about specific resource protection or management need." FWP should be all about managing and protecting the resource, not sending "programmatic messages"!

Their own language would indicate that this proposal was nothing more than a political and symbolic gesture which the NRA interprets as FWP moving in the direction of banning lead ammunition for the hunting of all game species. The passage of House Bill 159 would remove this purely political, potential outcome by restricting the authority of FWP to regulate this aspect of game management.

The National Rifle Association respectfully requests that you **support House Bill 159!**